

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### HINCHEY FIGHTS TO SAVE FUNDING FOR APPLE GROWERS

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today said he will fight to keep \$150 million for apple growers in the Agriculture Appropriations bill that is being finalized this week. Hinchey wrote the amendment that provided the funding in the House version of the bill, but the Senate version did not contain any aid for apple growers.

"The failure of the Senate to provide any funding for apple growers at all has left us in a difficult negotiating position," said Hinchey. "There is talk now of splitting the difference and giving the growers \$75 million. While that would certainly be helpful, it is far from adequate. I'm going to do everything I can to restore the full amount."

U.S. apple growers have sustained losses of \$1.5 billion over the past five years, including an estimated \$500 million during the past year. A glut of illegally dumped Chinese apple juice concentrate on the market was a major factor in those losses.

As a member of the Agriculture Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey authored an amendment to provide \$150 million in aid to apple growers. The amendment was included in the Agriculture Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2002 that passed the House in July. On October 25, however, the Senate passed its version of the bill without including any funding for this purpose. A joint House-Senate conference committee will convene on Thursday to resolve the differences between the two bills. The resultant conference report will be voted on by both chambers and sent to the president after passage. Hinchey is a member of the conference committee.

"The US apple industry is suffering serious financial hardship for the fifth straight year," said Hinchey. "The apple growers of America are in great danger of going out of business if they don't get some help. My colleagues in the House agreed that the growers should be given \$150 million. I'll be fighting to get my fellow conferees to reach the same conclusion."